



Norwood Park and Recreation District

P.O. Box 645

Norwood, Colorado 81423

[www.norwoodparkandrec.org](http://www.norwoodparkandrec.org)

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## Summary of Proceedings

### Master Plan Update Retreat

#### for Norwood Park & Recreation District

Held Thursday, April 30, 2026, 8:30am - 4:30pm, at the Livery (1555 Summit St), Norwood, CO

Members of the community and the Board of Directors gathered to help establish an updated Master Plan for the Norwood Park & Recreation District, a Title 32 Colorado Special District.

In attendance:

Directors: Krys Smith, Karl Cody, Kelvin Verity (via Zoom)

Staff: Liza Tanguay, Daiva Chesonis

Community members: Kerry Bentler, Lone Cone Library Interim Director & parent; Lisa Foxwell, long-time contributor & LCLT Board member; Galena Gleason, San Miguel County Commissioner & parent; John Hidy, USFS Trails Manager & outdoors enthusiast; Garrett & Katrina McLarty, NPRD volunteers & parents; Gretchen Wells, JFK Foundation Board member & past NPRD Board member; Ken Lukaszewski, community member & parent; Brendan Forrest, musician & teacher.

#### What are we building from?

2010 NPRD Master Plan / 2024 Community Survey / 2026 West End Vision Plan

Projects and Programs:

Completed (historical) [displayed on the Time Line wall]: high school baseball field with lights, fairgrounds ice rink, Norwood Nordic Association and Busted Arm Nordic Ski Trails created, Burn Canyon Trails, The Livery and Oliver House properties acquired, added arts-centered organization, Wright's Mesa Disc Golf course, Pickleball courts, Beaver Park Trails initiative

Completed (recent): youth roller hockey, Try It Tuesdays, Happenings Kiosk, N3 Music & Theater Club (teens & tweens)

In-Progress: Wright's Mesa Disc Golf course relocation, chamber music concerts, Music on the Mesa free concerts, community theater production, SNL: Saturday Night at the Livery speakers series, pickleball, karaoke nights, climbing wall, facility rentals.

In the pipeline: Summer theater camp, fiddle tunes jam sessions, pump track revitalization, Colorado 150/America 250 Bucket List Challenge, Shakespeare in the Yard

OF NOTE: The 2010 plan projected NPRD would generate \$110–150K/year in mill levy revenue. Reality: \$33,000/year. The total operating budget is ~\$100K, made up through grants, donations, and fundraising. The district covers 418,500 acres.

#### **The Mission**

*To provide diverse year-round recreation and arts opportunities through the creation and maintenance of high quality parks, trails, facilities, events and programs.*



All the District does would not be possible without key volunteers committing to keep programs going.

Currently:

- Ted Mueller & Americo Velez — Pickleball
- Shawn Fallon & Ashley Berard — Disc Golf
- Kelvin Verity & Hannah Rossman — Norwood Nordic Association
- Brendan Forrest — Local acoustic music
- Ellen, Garrett, Daiva & Rob — Climbing Wall
- Karl, Ken & Tristan — Ice rink / roller hockey / youth programs
- Liza Tanguay — Community theater
- Brock Benson — Youth theater

The distinction was made between core volunteers (long-term program champions) vs. event volunteers (1–2 hour helpers). The latter is harder to cultivate but important for community culture. Music on the Mesa was cited as a model for cultivating the “give me an hour and a half” type of volunteer.

#### What is still or most relevant?

From original 2010 Master Plan:

- Trails and trailhead connections — Still a top priority
- Parks — Clarification needed\* (Town Park - what is the vision?); acquiring land for parks was in the 2010 plan
- Recreation Center — Long-standing dream; keeps coming up
- Collaboration — Youth programs in particular
- Communication — Major gap; came up constantly throughout the day\*
- Norwood Loop Trail — Still in the plan; incomplete

From the Survey:

- Arts, theater, and music — Extremely relevant; strong community support
- Senior programming — Needs more attention; mentioned repeatedly
- Youth programs — Significantly harder than adult programming
- Pool — Strongest request in the surveys

From the West End Vision Plan:

- Trails and trailhead connections (public lands)— Progress made but much still to do
- Senior programming
- Healthy living, well-bring
- Community gatherings

\*An important discussion evolved from “relevancy”. And Garrett’s notes that he shared captured it well:

#### **IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION: WHO MANAGES WHAT**

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A significant portion of the morning meeting addressed public confusion about roles:

- Town of Norwood manages town parks (through Public Works)
- NPRD does not manage town parks, despite its name
- Trails and trail development is through US Forest Service and BLM
- San Miguel County manages the fairgrounds and adjacent ball fields
- NPRD's jurisdiction covers the broader district (418,500 acres), with collaboration at the edges

This confusion is widespread. A Venn diagram was strongly recommended as a visual tool to clarify (see Goals below):

- What NPRD controls directly
- What it collaborates on
- What falls entirely outside its purview
- Key contacts for each area

#### NPRD'S ROLE: THE "BACKSTOP" MODEL

One of the most important concepts of the day:

- Provides insurance umbrella for volunteer groups (Nordic Association, disc golf, climbing wall, etc.)
- Acts as fiscal agent for groups not yet 501(c)3
- Handles administrative overhead so volunteer champions can focus on their programs
- Broad mission/vision allows NPRD to legitimately support a wide range of community activities
- Key insight: NPRD's most powerful role may be as a catalyst, not a manager — supporting things that others want to do rather than owning every program

This model was seen as one of NPRD's greatest strengths. The afternoon reinforced that casting clear vision and then stepping back to let others champion programs — with NPRD as the backstop — is the most scalable and sustainable approach.

#### Where are we now? Assets, opportunities, challenges and gaps

Assets include the buildings and grounds of the NPRD Campus (1555 Summit St.), public wi-fi, growing database of contacts tagged by interests, sports equipment (hockey, roller hockey, skates, youth soccer), theater props/sets/costumes, stage & lights, reputation, administrative necessities.

Opportunities may come from Town park - skate park, old school campus, fire station future, high school track, non-rec collab (Rotary), Library grounds, equipment/gear inventory collab, Loop trail - timing. And collaborations with Montrose West Rec, NYO, True North, Tell. Mtn Club, national club sports orgs (archery, swimming), UMC Med Ctr, 4-H.

Challenges cited include reputation ("no pool yet?"), working in CDOT right-of-way, operational funding, covering cultural gaps, need for volunteer leads, and again: communication

Gaps called out here included kids' programming; need for small, consistent, available (open) spaces for informal gathering; a "welcome packet" for newcomers (and everyone)

#### Where do we want to be?

Before moving on to the next step, John Hidy provided us all with a thorough update on the current Beaver Park Trails Initiative status with the Forest Service. It was eye-opening, to say the least. Garrett's notes on this are more complete than mine:

#### FOREST SERVICE TRAIL UPDATE (Morning — presented by Sean Heidi, Trails Manager)

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Full detail in morning notes; key points summarized here for integrated reference.

- 350+ miles of trail in Norwood Ranger District; currently a one-person trail crew
- Proposed connector trails (Thunder to Busted Arm / Beaver Park) have completed feasibility study; next step is NEPA — but Forest Service has no current capacity; proponent must hire contractor
- Naturita Creek canyon is a non-starter with CPW — major wildlife corridor
- Connector trail between Thunder and Busted Arm is doable but must hug fence lines; “not a fun trail, but a functional connection”
- Trail construction: \$2,000–\$90,000/mile depending on terrain; 45-mile system = \$1M+
- Motorized grants are better funded; e-bikes are motorized and not going away
- Recommended next steps: “Bust out the maps” with CPW to get hard polygons; keep working group tight; front-load stakeholder [ranchers, foresters, hunters, guides, hikers/bikers, neighbors] concerns before NEPA; consider trail workshop with NPRD; hire an archeologist (even though there is currently no staff archeologists to approve findings).

Afternoon follow-up discussion:

- Several attendees expressed surprise at the complexity and cost — previously assumed connector trail was straightforward
- Consensus: NPRD’s role may be to advocate and develop partnerships rather than serve as primary proponent for a \$1M+ trail project
- Youth Trail Corps model (already launching in Nucla) flagged as a way to engage youth in trail work, develop life skills, and qualify for additional grant funding
- Mountain bike club concept floated — partnership with Brock (Montrose West); Burn Canyon Trail is an excellent beginner trail; school library bike checkout program as a compliment
- Historic equestrian trails near town flagged as a lower-cost, lower-regulatory-burden near-term trail option
- Town loop trail (2002 plan) seen as more achievable in near term — partial routes already exist; disc golf relocation to Mount Village could anchor one segment; fairgrounds/old school campus connection being discussed at county level

[I’ll add: must have a plan for who is maintaining trails after construction. \$\$]

At this point, everyone was asked to put their top goals and wishes on sticky notes on the Future Timeline that stretched out to 2046. The “Public Lands Trails” enlightenment influenced the outcome.

Years 0-3 included:

Communication & Collaboration (cluster), Town Park skate park and/or pump track (cluster), NYO outreach, new disc golf course, after-school / safe space kids’ programming, music & theater for elementary kids, Outing Club, Archery Club.

Years 3-6 included:

Town Loop Trail (cluster), Trails:USFS working group, Climbing Gym (cluster), school/public track, outdoor gear & equipment inventory w/library.

Years 7-12 included:

Pool & Rec Center (large cluster), Full time ED & staff & maintenance crew, Youth Trail Corps & Trail Crew, established network of facilities for climbing, disc golf, pool, track, theater, skate park, ice rink, indoor gym.

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### What's feasible? [with current budget & staffing]

Skate park (Town Park) - with grant: Tony Hawk Foundation; and Town of Norwood collaboration

Pump Track revitalization - already in the pipeline, collab with ToN, project champion Colby Brown, possible collab with Paradox Cycle/Brock Benson for Strider Fest

NPRD Clear Communication and Engagement Campaign - Goal: Constituents have a clear understanding of NPRD roles, projects, programs, and collaborations, and how to get involved.

### Prioritizing

Top 3 Short Term Goals:

- Town Loop Trail
- Skate Park
- Clear Messaging & Public Engagement

Top 3 Long Term Goals:

- Rec Center with pool and climbing gym
- School Track
- Year-round reliable arts programming, for youth & adults

After lunch, provided by Dark Sky Cafe & Mesa Rose Kitchen, some attendees stayed on for a deeper dive and more discussion.

### Action Planning

Choosing Short Term Goal #3: Communication/Collaboration

Victory is: Everyone in the District knows who does what, and how to get involved when it comes to recreation and arts. AND the information is actively kept up-to-date.

Elements needed:

- 1.) Clarification of NPRD's identity, scope, plan, what is happening;
- 2.) Venn Diagram/relationship map/decision tree for all things related to park & rec programs, projects, events;
- 3.) Call-to-action or contact info/method for all adjacent organizations, with their input as to method & meaning
- 4.) Side-quest: loop in info of what other organizations have in the pipeline, who are their Connector People

Getting the message out:

- 1.) Add a webpage on the NPRD website to hold the info (diagram, data, links)
- 2.) Send out "boxholder" postcards with QR code to added webpage
- 3.) Check with Naturita Library re: Resource Hub (Success? Use same platform?)
- 4.) Use all media outlets: schools, radio, paper, social media, and especially local people: connectors

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5.) Create handout for newcomers (Collaborate with library for Welcome Kit?)

Stretch goal: Have other entities (Lone Cone Library, Chamber, Town, Nucla Library) replicate the Venn Diagram model for their own organizations, creating a shared visual language across the West End

Timeline:

1st draft to NPRD BOD at June meeting

Final at July meeting

Launch at August 8 Music on the Mesa concert

Note for Master Plan: Revisit routinely

Lead/Champion:

NPRD staff (Liza & Daiva)

Looking at the Long Term Goal#1: Recreation Center with pool and climbing gym

It's currently not in the feasible group, but cannot be left out. So what can we be working on?

- Be in the "room where it happens" - get in front of the Old School Property planning process, since that is the most feasible land acquisition opportunity, and may be leveraged with proximity to the All-Purpose-Room (indoor gym)
- Get a study done in order to have a basis for a "right sized" plan
- Keep in mind the importance of multi-dimensional activities available within the same walls ("while I'm climbing, you go get your laps in, then we'll meet out here")
- Be proactive about getting the community on the same page prior to the Old School Property discussions. (have a pool party?)
- Get a list of applicable grants, related health programs, sports organizations and build relationships.

(My personal elephant in the room: addressing how the operations budget might be met. But there's time to go there.)

The Group adjourned at 4:00pm, as it was time to collect kids from school.

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